


MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council Members

CC: Marc A. Ott, City Manager

FROM: Larry Weis, General Manager 

DATE: May 29, 2013

SUBJECT: Critical Business Need Authorization for repair of chiller at Downtown District Cooling Plant

ACTION:

As detailed below, and in accordance with City Council-approved purchasing procedures, I am designating as a Critical Business Need of Austin Energy, the immediate repair of a chiller at the Paul Robbins District Cooling Plant. The cost for repairs is estimated at \$138,980. With rising temperatures increasing the demand on our downtown chilled water plants, the timely repair is critical in order to provide reliable service to our downtown customers. There are two ice chillers at this plant and not completing the repair to the failed chiller would result in a decrease in the Downtown District Cooling System's capacity to shift peak demand cooling load by half, or roughly 15 megawatt hours (MWh).

BACKGROUND:

On May 6, 2013, a tube rupture in Chiller #2 at the Paul Robbins District Cooling Plant resulted in condenser water filling the refrigerant side of the condenser. Subsequent testing found 13 damaged condenser tubes. The damaged tubes have been repaired and an extensive drying process was conducted for about a week. However, it has been determined that additional work, including shipping the compressor to the factory shop in Houston for rebuilding, needs to be completed to bring the unit back to service as quickly as possible.

Austin Energy plans to bring this forward to City Council for ratification in the near future. Please let me know if you have any questions.